

What is claimed is:

1. (currently amended) A combination of a tennis racquet equipped with a ball retrieving attachment attached to a shoulder of the racquet in a ball retrieving position for engaging and lifting a grounded tennis ball upon tangential contact with said tennis ball, said attachment comprising consisting essentially of a hooked fastener material adhesively attached to a convex outer perimeter portion of the shoulder so as to permit the hooked fastener material to make the tangential contact with said grounded tennis ball, with said hooked fastener material having a series of pre-shrunk nylon monofilament hooks for engaging and lifting the grounded tennis ball upon the tangential contact, with said hooks being characterized as having an average hook width of at least 1.00 mm, an average hook depth of at least 0.6 mm, an average monofilament diameter greater than 8.0 mil and an average hook height of at least 1.70 mm.
2. (cancel) The combination according to claim 1 wherein the hooks are further characterized as having an average hook width of at least 1.0 mm.
3. (cancel) The combination according to claim 2 wherein the hooks are further characterized as having an average hook depth of greater than 0.5 mm.
4. (currently amended) The combination according to claim 1 wherein the average height of the hooks is at least 1.85 mm, the average diameter is at least 8.25 mil and the attachment is further characterized as having an average hook width of at least 1.0 mm and an average hook depth of at least 0.60 mm containing at least 250 hooks per square inch with the series being an arrangement of repetitive rows of the hooks.
5. (cancel) The combination according to claim 4 wherein the attachment contains at least 250 hooks per square inch with the series being an arrangement of repetitive rows of the hooks.
6. (original) The combination according to claim 5 ~~4~~ wherein the attachment comprises the hooks mounted to a rubber backing with a pressure sensitive adhesive for detachably mounting the attachment to the shoulder of the racquet.

7. (original) The combination according to claim 5 1 wherein the attachment is applied as a continuous strip to the shoulder of the racquet at a tennis ball retrieving position.

8. (original) The combination according to claim 7 wherein the attachment is positioned along an outer peripheral edge of the shoulder between an eight o'clock and four o'clock position.

9. (original) The combination according to claim 6 wherein the attachment contains at least 300 hooks per square inch, the average height of the hooks is greater than about 1.90 mm, the average hook width ranges from about 1.1 mm to about 1.3 mm and the average hook depth ranges from about 0.65 mm to about 0.75 mm.

10. (currently amended) A method for retrieving a grounded tennis balls possessing a standardized felt pile nap with a tennis racquet equipped with a ball retrieving attachment attached along an outer peripheral edge of a shoulder of the tennis racquet with the hooked material positioned thereupon at a retrieving position for engaging and lifting a grounded tennis ball upon tangential contact therewith, said method comprising consisting essentially of:

a) providing a strip of a hooked material having a pressure sensitive adhesive applied to a resilient backing member equipped with a plurality of pre-shrunk nylon monofilament hooks of an average monofilament diameter of at least 8.0 mil, an average hook height of at least 1.85 mm, an average hook width of at least 1.0 mm, and an average depth of at least 0.6mm, with the hooks being of a spiral configuration arranged in repetitive rows of at least 250 hooks per square inch;

b) applying the pressure sensitive strip to the outer peripheral edge of the shoulder of the tennis racquet at the retrieving position so as to permit the nylon monofilament hooks of the hooked material to make the tangential contact with the grounded tennis ball;

c) tangentially contacting a and intermeshing the felt pile nap of the grounded tennis ball onto the strip with the nylon monofilament hooks of said hooked material so as to engage and hook a tennis ball nap onto the hooks of the strip onto the felt pile nap of the grounded tennis ball with said nylon monofilament hooks;

d) lifting the hooked tennis ball engaged by the nylon monofilament hooks with the tennis racquet; and

e) retrieving the lifted tennis ball from the strip by unhooking said monofilament hooks from the felt pile nap.

11. (original) The method according to claim 10 wherein the method includes the applying of the strip at a contacting position between a nine o'clock to a three o'clock position of the shoulder.

12. (currently amended) The method according to claim 10 wherein the average monofilament diameter is at least 8.25 mil, the average height is at least 1.90 mm, the average hook ~~is at least 1.05 mm~~ ranges from about 1.1 mm to about 1.3 mm, and the average hook depth ~~is at least~~ ranges from about 0.65 mm to about 0.75 mm.

13. (original) The method according to claim 12 wherein the applying includes the applying of at least one strip positioned along the peripheral edge located from a nine o'clock position to about a three o'clock position.

14. (original) The method according to claim 13 wherein the strip covers the nine o'clock position and the three o'clock position.

15. (original) The method according to claim 13 wherein a continuous strip is applied to the shoulder.